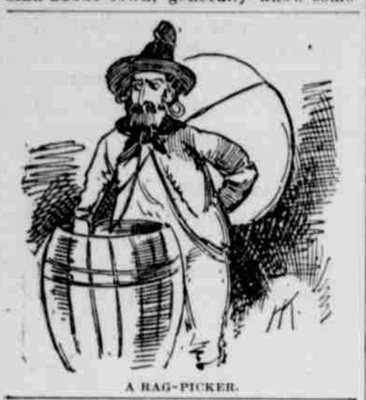
FINDERS AND KEEPERS.

THE PERQUISITES OF THE RAG-PICKER'S PROFESSION.

A Quaint Trade that Deals with the Flotsam and Jetsam of a Great City—What the World Loses and What the World Finds.

THE carelessness and extravagance of residents of large cities have given rise to a new industry during the past few years, and no better name has been found to designate the followers of this modern avocation than that of "Finders." What is a "finder?" You would propound the query indefinitely among the higher ranks of society without obtaining a satisfactory answer, but the reporter or policeman, the average man about town, generally know some-



A RAG-PICKER.

thing of this new and strange class, which probably came into existence in the guise of an indigent tramp or beggar, and has been recruited since from the ranks of ragpickers, garbage-collectors, and the like, until, in a city like Chicago, many thousands make the "finding" business a part of their daily labor.

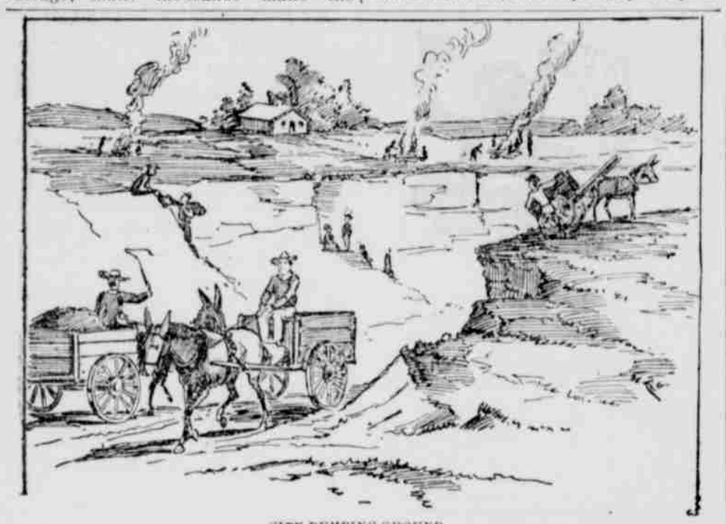
A finder is a seeker, and a seeker a man who finds. Finds what? A living. Where? In the dust-heap, in the garbage-box, along the streets—above the surface, under the surface—on the water and under the water. Keen eyes, quick hands, a knowledge of trivial values, a further knowledge of the laws of flotsam and jetsam, all the requisites to success in this unique calling, and precocious children, shrewd peddlers, professional junkmen, and vagrants generally comprise the bulk of the class.

At first, the finder began business on

A RICH FIND.

the beach at fashionable watering places. The action of the tide played strange freaks with the valuable stray coins and general articles dropped, thrown away, or lost by frequenters of the sandy shore. What yesterday covered up to-day unearthed, and one professional claimed to have ended a season of keen picking in the sand several hundreds of dollars ahead. The business then spread to the large Eastern cities. At the first break of day the various finders would pursue various routes. Here would be a package dropped from some swift wagon in the darkness, maybe only a whip, a strap, a blanket, a cushion, a milk-can cover, a bag of oats; but all was fish that came to the finder's net, and occasionally a freight or express parcel, a fine silk hat, an overcoat, a pocket-book, a watch, a revolver would reward his vigilance. The gutters were carefully scanned. The scene of a street fight revealed a lost pin or ring; the scene of a robbery, a purse dropped by the thief in his flight. Spectacles, umbrellas, gloves, wraps, and the like were most frequently found near theaters. Stray coins were sure to be obtained along the street-car lines, and the early sweepings from saloons usually panned out more than one sawdust-covered quarter or dime. Soon, however, every thirsty tramp, who was not too busy emptying out stale beer from kegs or robbing clothes-lines in the early dawn, "got onto the racket," as the saying goes, and the streets were pretty well scanned between dawn and sunrise. Then the trade became less lucrative and more systematic and difficult. Various lines developed themselves, and accidental findings were abandoned for a legitimate trade in the seeking line. The eager seeker waiting for daylight found that the work of civilization had denuded his calling of half its original interest. He would hasten forth on his quest to discern his accustomed course already gone over. The street-sweeping machine had preceded him, and car tracks, gutters and pavement were spick and clean as a kitchen floor. Dust, coins and all had been disturbed by the street-sweeper, and wagons had carted away the refuse. Then a regular system of operation was begun by the professional finder. He learned where the city dumping grounds were located. Much like a gold miner, he considered them his own personal claim, but invaders came. A fight or a division of spoil was necessary. The latter system came into vogue, and a visit to the various spots where the refuse of the city is dumped is likely to reward the observer with some very curious sights.

In a great city like Chicago the sweeping of the streets comprise many hundred wagon loads daily. Some of this refuse is loaded on scows that are towed out into the lake, where it is dumped, but most of it is used to fill in abandoned quarries, streets below grade, and the like. The finders' work at a spot being filled up is as business-like as that of a miner. So many people want their front yards filled up with dirt that numerous loads of street dust designed for the dumping grounds never reach their intended destination. This saves time to the cartman, and secures him tobacco money. Most of the stuff, therefore, that reaches the dumping grounds, consists of the contents of ash-boxes, garbage barrels, and the sweepings of alleys. When a load arrives, the gang of pickers, usually numbering about half a dozen, surround the wagon. As soon as the refuse reaches the ground, they begin poking in and out the load, spreading it about, prodding it with their long hooked sticks. One man looks for bones only, another for glass, a third for iron, a fourth for rags, a fifth for paper, a sixth for bottles. Having secured each his portion of the plunder, they adjourn to a spot near by, where they have a roaring fire burning. Surrounding it each man has his heap. If a piece of wood with an iron bolt through it is found, it is placed on the fire. In some loads from hotels some good pieces of food or fruit are found, and this comprises the lunch of the finders. By nightfall they have gathered quite a bagful of truck, often finding such valuables as rings, coins, knives, forks, spoons, dishes, copper bottoms of kettles, and especially scraps of



CITY DUMPING GROUND.

tin, which are pounded into a mass to make sash-weights.

The regular ragpickers and junkmen of the city also do a thriving side trade in keeping a sharp lookout for stray valuables. The housewife, dazzled with a glittering array of new tin pans, very often trades off a vest or a coat of her faithful spouse, in which he has left a diamond stud, or a roll of bills, or the like. Old pieces of furniture with secret compartments all out of date and old stoves are often made the receptacles of treasures—instance the one in which a man recently built a fire, never dreaming that his wife had placed therein savings amounting to several hundred dollars, her thickheadedness being of a piece with the man who rolled four hundred dollars in a newspaper, enveloped it, put on a two-cent stamp, and directed it to his family in Germany. The pack broke open in the mailing room before it left the city. In the large warehouses, where rags are assorted by girls, very rich finds sometimes occur. A valuable diamond ring is an occasional windfall, and money and minor articles of jewelry very often reward a search through rejected garments. A dead baby was once unearthed from a package of rags, and important papers sometimes drift into this catch-all of cast-off clothing. Laundrymen who are disposed to be dishonest reap a rich harvest in studs, sleeve-buttons, and the like, and ready-made clothing men occasionally find a roll of money in a suit that some excited customer has tried on, and into the pockets of which he has unwittingly transferred his cash. Another class of finders is the newspaper-grabbers. There were two men in Chicago some time ago who claimed to have made a living by gathering up newspapers left about by guests at hotels, and selling them to laundrymen for wrapping purposes. Not quite so honest are the gold-dust beaters, some of whom, it is alleged, let their hair grow long, grease it thoroughly, and, by running their fingers through it constantly, carry home what

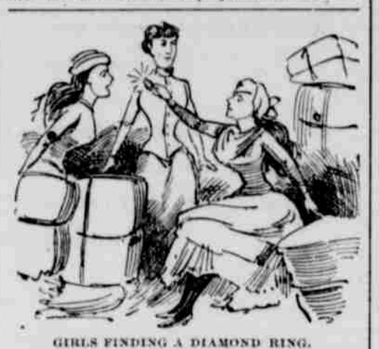
RIVER PIRATES.

amounts to quite a pile when combed out at night.

Another line of finders include the conductors on street-cars. The number of articles left in omnibuses and street and railway cars is something incredible. Usually valuables lost in these public conveyances are taken to the company's headquarters, where they may be recovered by the loser. In winter, the street-car barn men reap a rich reward for their perseverance in sifting the hay that is swept out of the cars, and many coins and valuables are lost between the car side and the window.

The nautical finder is the true finder, after all. He is termed a "wharf rat," a "river pirate," a "bird of prey;" but he plies an occupation that calls for hard work and application, all the same. His stamping-ground is the river, his outfit a broad scow, a pair of oars, and some poles, hooks, and ropes. If an anchor is lost he grapples for it, and very often brings up a valuable piece of junk—pulleys, metal, and often a watch or money. The temptation to cut a cable leads him into trouble many times; but the profession includes a fair average of honest workers. Another class fish only for fuel and loose lumber and the like.

Any one may become a finder. A story is told of a boy who found an abandoned horse. He nursed it to health, rigged up a rattle-trap wagon, and started out every day on the quest for building material. He stole nothing, but when he found a dimension stone on the prairie or in a rut he carted it home. Bricks the same, and piles of lumber



GIRLS FINDING A DIAMOND RING.

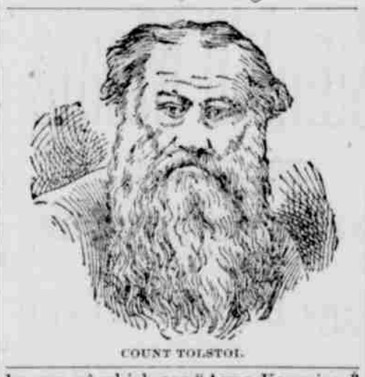
and nails were to be had for the seeking in the vicinity of new blocks of houses. In a year he had the material to build a house, and he did it. The finding trade is an exciting one, sometimes a lucrative one, but the inexperienced had far better find employment, sure and regular, than start out in a line that makes a vagrant and a chance-worker of its votary, at the best.

TOLSTOI.

The Famous Author of the "Kreutzer Sonata."

Count Leo Tolstoi, the Russian author, is in reality the founder and leader of a new philosophical and religious sect. Although Emile Zola claims that he has only adopted and barbarized the ideas of the French realistic school, he is accepted in Russia as an original thinker and the preacher of a new gospel. The Count comes of an ancient aristocratic family, but he emphasizes his belief in the equality of man by discarding the fashionable trappings of the nobility and adopting a style of dress which is a sort of compromise between the costume of the moujik, or peasant class, and that of the nobles. He wears a loose-fitting black blouse, an ordinary trousers, a wide, brimless slouch hat, and goes without collars, cuffs, or ornaments of any kind.

Tolstoi was born on the estate where he now resides, at Yasnaia Poliana, in Southern Russia, and was educated at the Moscow University. He entered the army and had the same chance of a brilliant career as other young Russian nobles, but his literary tastes and strong convictions gave him an aversion to military life. After filling an important civil function he finally resolved to devote himself to the propagation of his ideas through his books and by personal teaching and example among the peasantry in the neighborhood of his home. He has written numberless works, among the best



COUNT TOLSTOI.

known of which are "Anna Karenina," "War and Peace," "Before Tilsit," "The Invasion," "Borodino," and his latest work, "Kreutzer Sonata," which has called forth so much criticism.

Tolstoi has had thirteen children born to him, of whom eight are now living, the youngest being only a few years old. He speaks English and French fluently, and is a close student of Western literature. But his chief studies are among the peasantry. At certain seasons of the year he receives large numbers of them, who come on pilgrimages to see him and to seek his advice, and recently he walked all the way from Moscow to his home, a distance of over two hundred miles, stopping in the peasants' cabins on the way and sharing their humble fare. When he adopted his present mode of life he learned the trade of a shoemaker and has worked at it constantly ever since, besides laboring daily at ordinary farm and garden work. His food is of the simplest. He has given up the use of meat, wine, beer and tobacco, and about the only luxury he indulges in is tea.

"FAINT heart never won fair lady," or conquered difficulties, or achieved glory; but insolent assumption is more contemptible than a lack of moral courage. Be determined, fearless, energetic—not impudent. Stick up for your own rights with all your soul and all your strength, but never infringe a hair's-breadth on the rights of others.

A GOOD memory is a blessing, says a writer. And it is one that wealth cannot buy. Just look at a man who suddenly becomes rich. He cannot even remember the faces of his old friends.

SOME people are always agetting into a box, and asking you to lift the lid.

WE suppose a nose my be said to be broke when it hasn't got a scent.

REFORM IN FUNERALS.

AN UNDERTAKER'S VIEW AND EXPERIENCE.

The Craving for Showy Funerals by Relatives of the "Late Lamented"—Customs that Ought to Be Abolished—Why Some People Attend Funerals—Sad Lack of Respect Shown by Gossipers and Curiosity-Seekers.

YES, we undertakers meet with some strange experiences while coming in contact with all sorts of people," said a prominent undertaker in one of our country towns recently.

"At no time do the various phases of the human character come to the surface more conspicuously than at the demise and burial of a friend or relative. One naturally associates nothing but the most overwhelming grief with occasions of this kind, but in my many years' experience I have found some instances where the nearest relatives of the deceased displayed more anxiety for a 'show' funeral, costly trappings of woe, and a tall monument in memory of the dear departed than grief at his departure. In other cases, greed swallowed up grief, and a desire to hear the will read and to take possession of the dead man's shoes was the deeper emotion. I have attended funerals where not a tear was shed by any member of the bereaved family, the whole ceremony seeming a mockery in deference to custom; where, but for fear of Mrs. Grundy, the dead would have been buried like a dog—all obsequies dispensed with.

"These, of course, are exceptional cases. There are but few people so debased that some heart does not bleed at their death, and few so hard and cold that they feel no real grief. Indeed, I sometimes wonder, knowing the deceased, how his demise can be so deeply regretted, or so much respect shown for his memory. But, to the credit of poor human nature be it said, I think most grief displayed at funerals is real."

"Why do most people attend funerals?"

"Ostensibly to show their respect for the memory of the dead or regard for the relatives; but I have often asked myself what particular degree of respect was shown to either by a crowd of people assembling at the house of mourning and making this time of woe the occasion for gossiping, talking politics, etc.

"I well remember being called to conduct the funeral of an old gentleman who had been greatly respected in the community and beloved by a large circle of relatives. The funeral was held at the house, which was too small to accommodate the large number gathered there. Only a part of the crowd could get within hearing of the minister's voice, and while the heart-broken wife and sorrowing children listened to the words of consolation for the widow and fatherless, read from the Book of books, the loud voices and laughter of men could be heard just outside the windows in coarse jest, and ever and anon snatches of gossip or discussion of farm matters or politics were wafted in. To be sure, these same men filed past the coffin with bared heads and looks of sorrow at the still, white face of their old friend, but they would have shown more genuine respect for the living by staying away. For the dead it could not matter—he was deaf to all. When the solemn procession wound into the cemetery, a marble dealer's wagon stood not far from the new-made grave, the driver being at work upon a stone close by. Did he pause in his work? Not he! As the solemn words, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," were uttered, he kept on pounding, not even looking up, and the sounds of the earth falling upon the coffin—the most heart-rending of all sounds to those who have just consigned a loved one to his last resting place—were mingled with the clatter of his hammer and trowel. Even the grave diggers—poor, rough, ignorant fellows though they were—displayed more delicacy of feeling, refraining from their task of filling the grave till the mourners were out of hearing.

"In direct contrast to the above was the conduct of a young carpenter of my acquaintance. He was at work, with a gang of men under him, upon a large building, which he was in great haste to finish. His haste was not so great that he forgot common decency, however. A funeral procession came in sight around a bend in the road. Leaving his bench, he stepped to the foot of the ladder and called in a subdued tone, 'Boys, come down, please!' And, uncovering his head, he stood reverently, his example followed by his workmen, until the procession had passed. Not until the last carriage was out of sight was work resumed. And yet the deceased and his friends were all strangers to him. The carpenter's jacket covered the heart of a real gentleman.

"Not many months had elapsed after the burial of the old gentleman above mentioned ere I was again called to perform a like task in the same family—the mother this time. She was an active church member, a devoted Christian, and a good woman; but some of her sisters in the church, and those, too, whose silken raiment and lofty airs proclaimed them ladies (?), seated themselves in the kitchen, all other rooms being full, and devoted the time to the most trivial gossip, senseless tittering, and rude comments on everything about them. They were no thoughtless girls, either, mind you, but gray-haired matrons, like their sister lying so still and cold in the room beyond, surrounded by her sorrowing children. Outside could be heard the same talk and coarse laughter as on the former occasion. Now, tell me, is this respect for dead or living.

"Do I believe in opening the coffin to the public gaze? Most certainly I do not. To make a public show of a corpse is an outrage to the finer sensibilities, to say the least. Imagine the feelings of the heartbroken mourners obliged to sit and witness a crowd of people file past the coffin, some glancing at the remains with idle curiosity, some with scarcely concealed indifference, and a few—but only a few—dropping tears of real grief or sympathy upon the senseless clay. If the coffin must be opened to the gaze of the crowd, let it be first removed from the sight of the mourners; do not subject their already aching hearts and overwrought nerves to this additional and unnecessary ordeal.

"I have seen people—and I regret to say generally women—stand beside the open coffin, in plain sight and hearing of the mourners, and remark upon the appearance or dress of the deceased, the probable cost of the coffin, the manner in which the person died, or how some member of the bereaved family 'took' the death.

"Now, I say, let there be reform in country funerals, as there has been in the cities. Let no vulgar crowd of sight-seers gratify their morbid curiosity at the expense of a grief-stricken family, whose feelings at such a time should be held sacred."

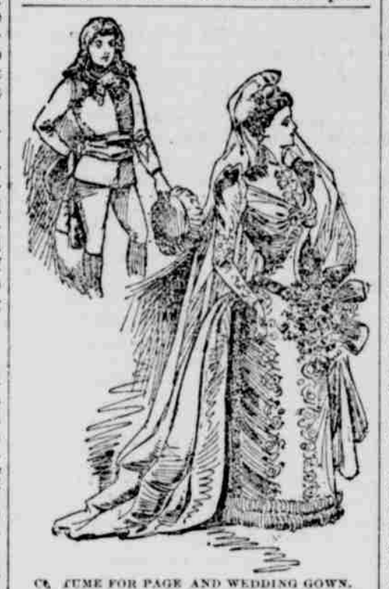
CLARA M. HOWARD.

HARVEY, Wis.

OF INTEREST TO WOMEN.

Costume for Page and Wedding Gown.

While many bridesmaids' gowns are chosen with a view to simplicity, they may be quite as picturesque and effective as those more elaborate. One charming gown, to be worn by the bridesmaid at an approaching fashionable wedding, is made of white crepe de chine over pale-blue surah, finished at the bottom of the skirt with very full lace. The bodice is laid in surplice folds, is high at the throat and has a double jabot of lace down the center. A sash of pale-blue moire ribbon outlines the bodice and ties at the left side in full bow and long ends. The sleeves are close below the elbow and high at the shoulder. The accompanying bouquet is to be of pale pink carnations and maiden-hair fern, and the hat of white crinoline has pale-



COSTUME FOR PAGE AND WEDDING GOWN.

blue ostrich plumes and white lace for garnitures. The illustrated "Fauntleroy" page's dress is made of ivory white plush, with deep collar and cuffs of Irish lace and sash of surah tied on the right hip. The wedding gown has a petticoat of white and gold brocade, trimmed with chatelaines of orange blossoms and is bordered with a double ruching of white chiffon. The train, as well as the sleeves and bodice proper, is of white satin brocade, while the waistcoat is of the gold brocade. The veil of tulle is fastened to the hair by two sprays of orange blossoms.

Disguised Blessings.

Very often an event which appears to be most unfortunate results in happiness and increased prosperity. It did not seem to a lady, of whom I have heard, a blessing when she was robbed; and yet she discovered before long that this was the case. She had directed her lawyer to invest a large sum of money in bank shares. Imagining that her instructions had been carried out, she heard the news of the closing of the bank's doors with dismay, as the claims of the creditors would have entailed her total ruin. The subsequent discovery, however, of her agent's embezzlement revealed the groundlessness of her apprehensions, her loss being limited to the amount intrusted to her dishonest representative. On the other hand, the unlucky recipient of a share in the same bank as a wedding present should for once have looked a gift horse in the mouth, and had no reason to congratulate himself on his father-in-laws's liberality, involving, as it did, the loss of all he possessed. To curse his enemy, so to speak, a member of a certain club, where the person disliked was being voted for, put in a black ball. It turned out that by doing so he had done the opposite of what he had intended—he had blessed rather than cursed him. The rule was that twenty members at least should vote, so by adding his twentieth ball, even though it were a black one, to nineteen white ones he had unconsciously and unwittingly elected him. A Scotch writer tells the following story: A native of Hoy went one day to his minister, and said: "Oh, sir, the ways of Providence are wonderful! I thought I had met with a sair misfortune when I lost baith my coo and my wife at since over the cliff, twa months sin'; but I gaed over to Graemsay, and I hae gotten a far better coo and a far bonnier wife." It was evident in his case, at least, that affliction had been a blessing in disguise.

IN a late series of experiments, Dr. Coch found that certain bodies, such as volatile oils, and certain metallic salts, such as nitrate of silver and preparations of gold, even in very small doses (1 to 1,000,000, and even less), destroy the bacilli of consumption in a very short time. He, therefore, concludes that in the course of time some drug may be discovered that will cure the disease by destroying the bacilli without injury to the body.

A LEVEL HEAD.

The Advantage of Presence of Mind in an Emergency.

During the late strike on the New York Central Railroad, the militia were ordered to be in readiness in case of a riot, but they were not called out.

In an interview Gov. Hill said the troops were not to be called upon except in case of an emergency. The emergency had not arisen, therefore they would not be ordered out. He remarked that this was the first great strike with which he had had experience, and he did not propose to lose his head; the only point at which there had then been any serious trouble was at Syracuse, and there a deputy sheriff had lost his head and precipitated an encounter.

The strike continued several weeks, and there was riotous action at various points along the road, but the civil authorities were able to cope with it without calling on the militia.

The test of a man's real ability comes when an emergency arises which makes a hasty call on his good judgment and discretion. The man who retains his presence of mind, maintains his equipoise and exercises sound discretion at such critical junctures, is to be relied on and will be put to the front.

Men with level heads have the staying qualities which do not falter in the face of danger. Otis A. Cole, of Kinsman, O., June 10, 1890, writes: "In the fall of 1888 I was feeling very ill. I consulted a doctor and he said I had Bright's disease of the kidneys and that he would not stand in my shoes for the State of Ohio." But he did not lose courage or give up; he says: "I saw the testimonial of Mr. John Coleman, 100 Gregory St., New Haven, Conn., and I wrote to him. In due time I received an answer, stating that the testimonial he gave was genuine and not overdrawn in any particular. I took a good many bottles of Warner's Safe Cure; have not taken any for one year."

Gov. Hill is accounted a very successful man; he is cool and calculating and belongs to the class that do not lose their heads when emergencies arise.

Will the Steam Engine Go?

A New York paper states that on the eve of his departure for Europe Henry Villard declared that he believed that few more locomotive engine would be built in this country. He added that he had recently come in possession of information which convinced him that electricity could be generated directly by combustion and that it would produce more force from the same amount of fuel than steam applied to an engine does. One of his objects in visiting England and the countries on the continent is to examine the storage batteries, which have been much more successful there than here. He believes that electricity may revolutionize transportation. It already moves passenger cars over short lines of road, and the way to move both passenger and freight trains over long lines has been pointed out by them. Electricity has accomplished more for transportation than steam did in the same length of time.

In Maine, which has the most abundant water power of any State, there is great excitement over employing it to generate electricity for moving trains and propelling machinery. It is thought that car may be moved on most of the railroads in the State by electricity generated by water power furnished by the streams and conducted by wires. Most of the roads run near streams that furnish water power that is not now put to use.

It is also thought that this water power can generate electricity that may be employed to run machinery at a distance from falls. Mills built in the immediate vicinity of rivers and large streams are always in danger when the volume of water is unusually large or when great quantities of ice and logs are carried down in the spring. By using water power to generate electricity the mills may be built in places that offer greater security.

IT is asserted by men of high professional ability that when the system needs a stimulant nothing equals a cup of fresh coffee. Those who desire to rescue the dipsomaniac from his cups will find no better substitute for spirits than strong, newly made coffee without milk or sugar. Two ounces of coffee, or one-eighth of a pound, to one pint of boiling water, makes a first-class beverage, but the water must be boiling, not merely hot. It is asserted that malaria and epidemics are avoided by those who drink a cup of hot coffee before venturing into the morning air. Burned on hot coals coffee is a disinfectant for a sick room, and by some of the best physicians it is considered a specific in typhoid fever.

AT the time Gen. Custer tamed a tiny field mouse, and kept it in a large, empty inkstand on his desk. It grew very fond him and ran over his head and shoulders and even through his hair.